

1923

EC1158 The Arrangement of Furniture

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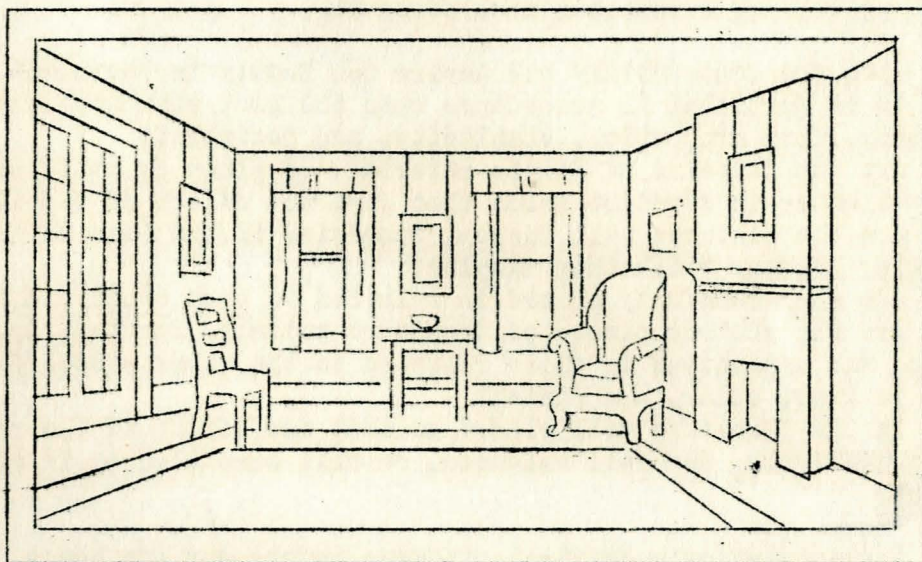
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1923

Nebraska
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK
IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS
U. of N. Agr. College & U. S. Dept. of Agr. Cooperating
W. H. Brokaw, Director, Lincoln

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1158

THE ARRANGEMENT OF FURNITURE



In the spring when the days become longer and lighter and the air is full of new energy, there comes to the housekeeper a desire to change and improve her home if only by thoroly airing, cleaning, and washing everything that will endure such treatment. By this enthusiastic and energetic exercise she often nearly wears herself out so that at the end of the period of spring house cleaning, she has no vitality or enthusiasm left for estimating her work, to see what permanent results she has accomplished and what enduring improvements she has made. It is worth while to begin before the season of spring house cleaning to readjust our ideas as well as our furniture - so that timely thought may inspire and direct some course of purposeful future action.

The Importance of Taking Account of Stock

Now is the time to take account of stock - to survey the house, and plan a campaign of readjustment that may be followed gradually as is practicable, one room at a time, year by year, or however rapidly or slowly conditions allow. A carefully considered and well planned course of action will direct the expenditure of money for those things which are most important and necessary, and in an order which relates them systematically. Too often we buy curtains for one room, a rug for another, a new chair or table for a third in a rather haphazard and accidental way, without considering whether or not these things are contributing as much to the improvement of the whole house as if we had bought all of them for one room and made readjustments to meet the needs in other rooms. Better one room in the house which is satisfying and beautiful and a plan for improving the others gradually than six or eight that are "just growing" without a constructive plan - that contain old and new, good and bad, indiscriminately mixed.

Estimating Our Own Home Furnishings

In studying the problem of furnishing and decorating our own homes, we may well begin with the living room, for this is the most important room of the house - where every member of the family is at home, and friends and guests are often entertained. The living room is most expressive of the ideals and tastes of the household - especially of the home-maker herself who chooses and arranges the furnishings. Let us ask ourselves questions about it.

Does the room satisfy our desire for beauty in the home?

Is it furnished in accordance with the best standards that we know of color harmony, fine proportion, simplicity, and restraint?

Are the curtains of simple material, of plain or small conventional pattern, well-hung in straight folds that give the effect of dignity and simplicity?

Are the pictures well chosen, inspiring in the idea which they suggest and the color harmony which they display?

Are they carefully placed in relation to each other and to the furniture?

Are the various pieces of furniture suitable for their purpose, good in proportion, and harmonious in their relation to the other pieces (as well as to the woodwork) in line, color, and finish?

Is the furniture well placed so that the effect of the room is uncrowded, orderly, comfortable, and well balanced, or will some changes in arrangement be an improvement?

A constructively critical attitude toward our own homes which results in ambition and interest to make changes that are desirable and possible, will help us to find opportunity for making many improvements that involve little or no expense and not too much labor.

Home Furnishing Includes Both Selection and Arrangement

Furnishing or refurnishing a house consists of two processes. We must choose our furnishings wisely, and we must combine them by good arrangement. For the bride or the woman who can choose a completely new combination of rugs, wall coverings, hangings, and furniture without the hampering restrictions of money, the task is a comparatively simple one. For most of us, however, this house furnishing consists rather in adding at intervals a few new things to those which we already have, or substituting new for old furnishings that are worn out. Altho it is more interesting to begin at the beginning by building a new house and choosing new furnishings for it - with perfection the aim, - common experience limits most of us to the less direct method of an occasional change in window hangings, a newly papered or retinted room, or, once in a while, a new piece of furniture - and sometimes, but rarely, gives us the opportunity of completely refurnishing a whole room.

The Arrangement of Furniture and Its Effect

For every chance to buy new furniture that comes to the average woman there are a dozen opportunities to rearrange the furniture that is already collected. The placing or arrangement of furniture in a room is very important in determining the effect of the room. Even poor furniture may appear at its best if it is properly arranged against a simple, pleasing wall background, and allowed the dignity of adequate space. We have lately seen a house changed from a dull, commonplace, ordinary home into one that is dignified, attractive and individual, merely thru a readjustment of furniture to positions that were exactly right, and the addition of two or three simple pictures, well placed, and a new color note in inexpensive home-dyed window hangings, and well chosen decorative fabrics for table runners and cushions.

In rearranging the furniture of the home there is no expense involved. Thru occasional experimental changes and carefully considered readjustment we may find the ideal place for each piece of furniture, - the place where it seems to fit best and does "exactly belong" in relation to the doors, windows, and other furniture of the room. We are too likely to leave things where they happen to stand, placed there perhaps by accident or by somebody who took no thought for good arrangement. The sideboard may remain for years where the furniture-mover left it, altho he probably set it in the first vacant wall space that he saw. Why not go into your home today with the attitude of an observant stranger, begin to notice what is ordinarily too familiar to attract your attention and make at least those improvements which are simplest and most easily effected.

Eliminating All Unnecessary Furniture

In looking over our homes with a critical eye, let us take account of stock. Does everything in the room belong there? Is it actually necessary for the comfort of the occupants? Does it add to the pleasing effect of the whole room? Could anything be moved out without discomfort or inconvenience, or without harming the effect of completeness and unity? There is a simple rule which will guide us in the right direction if we apply it honestly to our own homes. "Have nothing in your houses which you do not know to be useful and believe to be beautiful". These are the words of William Morris who did more than anyone in his time to influence people toward beautiful simplicity in an age of over-crowding and over-decoration.

Applying this rule honestly and directly would lead us to cast out many things that have collected in our homes which we have not had the courage or energy to remove. There are the four or five extra chairs in the dining room that came in the set but which are never used except at Christmas or Thanksgiving. Why not use them in the hall or bed room if they harmonize with the other furnishings, or move them to the store room? In the dining room they take up space, give a crowded effect to the room, and demand frequent dusting. Consider the couch in the living room. It is usually out of place and undecorative, for one may rest better in a bedroom. We all know of pictures - old, familiar, unbeautiful - which no one admires and which do not belong where they hang. But there they stay because "They have always been there". Why spend time and energy in cleaning useless and unnecessary things that are not beautiful just because it has long been a habit? The world contains so many beautiful things! No one can afford this waste on purposeless objects which do not give the satisfaction of beauty or use. Throwing such things away is economy in the end, economy of time and energy, and spirit. It pays to think the thing thru, to gain the courage of your convictions and then be resolute in discarding entirely what has neither beauty or use. But do not move such things into the rooms of the children or the guest-room, unless they are really useful and appropriate for the place chosen.

When we remove familiar objects from their accustomed place the first effect is sometimes an unpleasant vacancy. A readjustment of furniture is often necessary. It is somewhat hard to adapt ourselves to any change; but time will teach us the advantages or disadvantages of the changes that we make, and mistakes are not difficult to rectify. Eventually we shall grow to appreciate simplicity and dignity which elimination fosters. Our rooms will gain in individuality and distinction thru more careful selection of the things that are necessary, suitable, and beautiful. Each object thus considered and retained will gain in dignity and worth. A single rose in the right vase seems more beautiful and precious than two dozen roses crowded into a bowl. Restraint is the keynote of distinction.

The Importance of Simplicity and "Spaces of Silence"

It is indeed a common tendency among us to over-crowd our rooms with furniture. During the last decade houses have grown more expensive and less expensive, rooms are smaller and fewer in number. The little house demands simple living and restraint in furnishing. It is likely to become cluttered if any but the indispensable pieces of furniture are used, and even those must be carefully considered as to size and placing before being purchased. More of us over-furnish our houses than under-furnish them; as a rule we have too much rather than too little furniture. Plain wall spaces undecorated by pictures and free from furniture, as well as large expanses of floor space lacking chairs and tables, give an effect of spaciousness that is very desirable. Filling the walls with pattern or pictures and filling the floor area with furniture, however fine and well chosen, gives an effect of confusion and diminishes the apparent size of the room. Occasional vacant spaces in the room, undecorated, unbroken in line, unaccented by color or pattern, give, "breathing spells" to the imagination and attention. These are spaces of silence, areas of rest, and are greatly to be desired in any room.

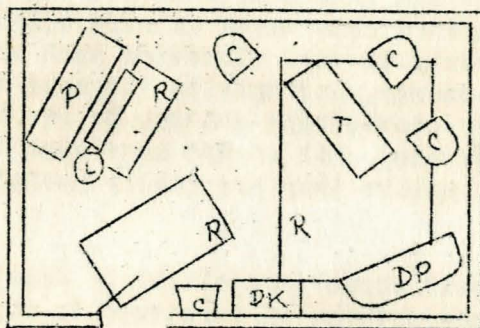
Guiding Rules For the Arrangement of Furniture

Because arranging the furniture in our rooms is a common and general problem, we will first consider some facts that may help us in placing our furniture to the best advantage. There are several guiding suggestions or rules which may be widely applied. Briefly states they are these:

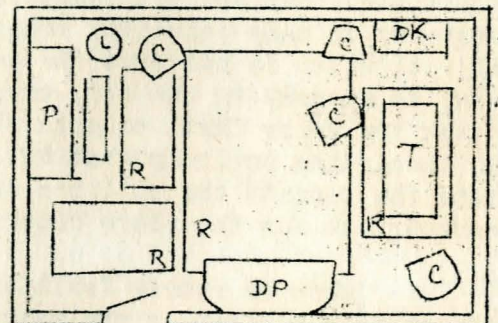
- A. Repeat the structural lines of the room.
- B. Build up a main center of interest and other secondary attractive centers or groups.
- C. Consider balance in placing and grouping furniture.

A. Place furniture so that it repeats the structural lines of the room.

Every room is a variation of a large rectangular box-shaped apartment in which openings (doors and window) are cut in the walls at various places. The structural lines are the lines established by the shape of the room and accented by the mouldings and casings. These are the vertical lines formed by the meeting of walls at corners, and by horizontal lines where walls meet floor, and where walls meet ceiling. The base board, picture moulding, tops and bottoms of door and window casings, all repeat the straight horizontal lines of the room. Doors and windows with their vertical lines in the casings repeat the straight vertical lines of the room.



C - Chairs
DK - Desk
DP - Davenport
L - Lamp
P - Piano
R - Rug
T - Table
W - Windows



Furniture should be placed so that its lines echo or are parallel to the walls of the room. In thus placing our furniture we shall conform to the rectangular pattern already set by the plan of the room. This rule will forbid the placing of a table diagonally in the center of the room, that is, "criss-cross" in relation to the walls. It dictates the placing of rugs on the floor with edges parallel to the

walls of the room, for in placing rugs on the floor we are putting one rectangle (the rug) on another (the floor), and the lines of the two rectangles should be related by repetition. This applies also in placing table runners and center pieces on tables. Accent the main structural lines by repetition. Avoid diagonal or criss-cross effects.

Treatment of corners:- A piano, table, couch, sideboard or any other large piece of furniture should not be placed across a corner of the room. This arrangement not only makes the room seem much smaller by cutting off too much floor space, but it destroys the impression of unity or relationship between the lines of the furniture and the lines of the room. In general it is not good to place large, heavy, or dark pieces close to the corner of any room because they appear to weigh down the corner unpleasantly. About two feet of space may well be allowed on any wall between a heavy object and corner. However, the corners of a room sometimes need to be accented or emphasized. Objects which may fittingly be placed in corners are chairs, round tables, piano lamps or reading lamps, tall clocks, or triangular shaped objects such as a corner cupboard or a triangular table.

Placing chairs:- Chairs are comparatively light and easily moved and may be placed at an angle - one of the few exceptions to the rule that requires the repeating of the structural lines of the room. They may be used in corner spaces and set across corners. It requires a large chair to fill a corner satisfactorily. But it is not good to set all the chairs in the room at an angle in relation to the walls. The straight chairs often look most effective and dignified in a formal arrangement against a wall. Dining room chairs are usually thus placed. One or two straight chairs, carefully placed against the wall, lend dignity to any room.

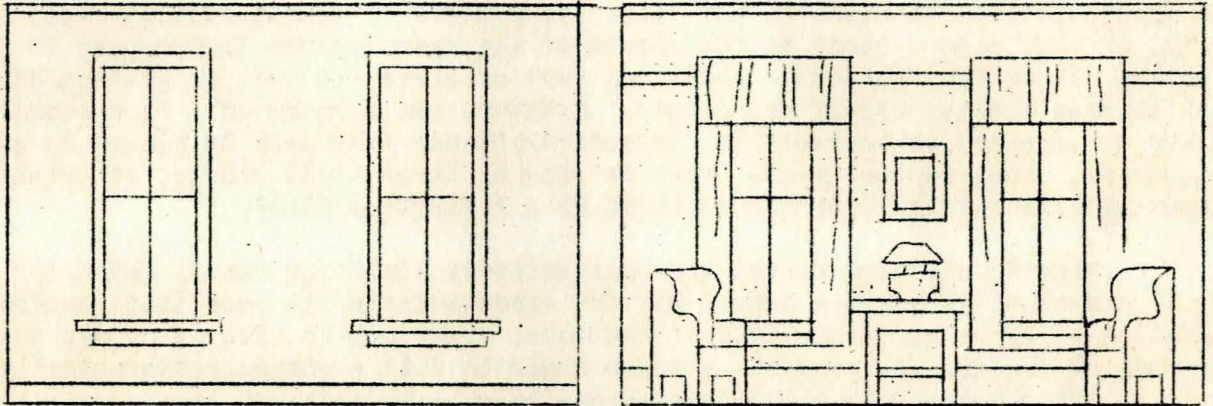
In repeating the structural lines of the room we gain the effect of order and dignity and space which is lost if too many directions are emphasized. Even in placing chairs at various angles, we must study the effect to avoid too many diagonal lines and too many different directions.

Rocking chairs are usually comfortable but difficult to keep in place and unsatisfactory in their tendency to travel around the room and because their "rockers" demand so much space. A comfortable chair that does not rock is a more satisfactory piece of furniture in every way.

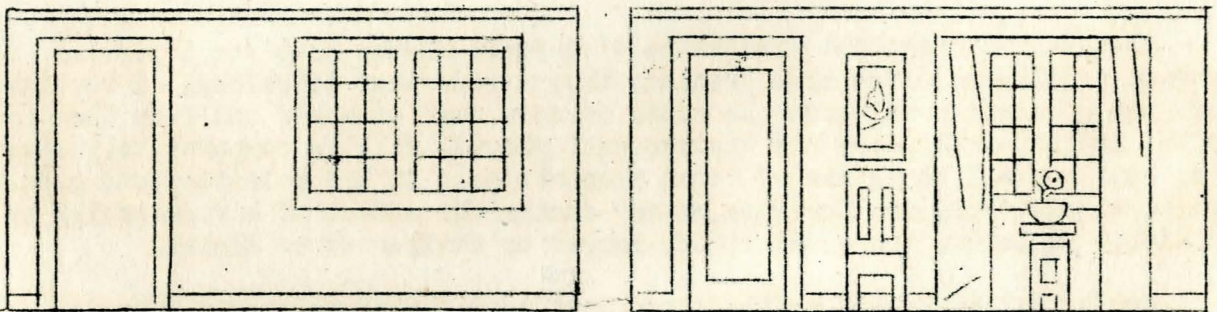
Changing the apparent dimensions of a room:- Rooms that are irregular in shape or proportion offer more problems than a room that is oblong. A rectangular room of good proportion in which the width is more than one-half and less than two-thirds the length, with doors and windows well placed, will be comparatively easy to arrange. But not all rooms are of ideal proportions. By the selection and placing of furniture, pictures, and hangings, we may change the effect of a room making it appear higher or lower, longer or wider, larger or smaller as we desire.

Rooms that have high ceilings and long narrow windows should be made to seem lower by the use of lines that lead the eye around the room instead of up and down. The ceiling color may be carried down for a foot or more and finished with a moulding, or, instead, two mouldings may be used, one at the top of the room and one on a level with the lower line of door or window casings. A paper with fine horizontal lines, like Japanese grass cloth, will help. Furniture which is long and not high in effect, accenting horizontal lines, will also help to counteract the actual height of the room. Pictures, single or in groups, that are chosen and hung to emphasize horizontal width will add lines carrying the eye around the room. In arranging window hangings a deep valance may be used and the draperies may be hung to emphasize width by using a rod which projects beyond the casings and holds the material

in a wider expanse than the window naturally suggests. (All the woodwork must be covered in this case and the material chosen should not be transparent. The curtains should stop at the lower edge of the window casing below the sill). Curtains reaching the floor increase the effect of height in windows. Two long narrow windows separated by a wall space about equal to the width of one window may be made to seem closer together by hanging a picture between them that is about as dark in effect as the woodwork of their casing. This picture should not be very high and narrow in effect. Beneath the picture a chair or small table may be placed.



In rooms that are too low, vertical effects should be accented. Window draperies may hang to the floor. Deep valences should be avoided - a valence is not necessary, but if desired should be made narrow. The picture moulding is placed at the top of the room at the joining of walls and ceiling. Narrow vertical stripes in the wall coverings may be chosen to increase height. Furniture that is rather high and not broad in effect should be selected. Pictures in which the vertical lines accenting height are dominant - which are really vertical rectangles placed upright - may be hung above chairs or narrow tables to give an effect of added height to the room.



In a room that is small, avoid using large heavy furniture. In such a room no furniture should be placed so that it projects far toward the center of the room. Center tables are to be avoided in any but very large rooms; they greatly diminish the apparent size and obstruct passage across the room. They give an overcrowded effect to most rooms. By the removal of a familiar table from the center surprising effect of spaciousness is gained. The present popular style of placing a davenport and table in the center of a room is good in a large room but a poor arrangement for a room of small or medium size. Placing the davenport against the wall is often much better.

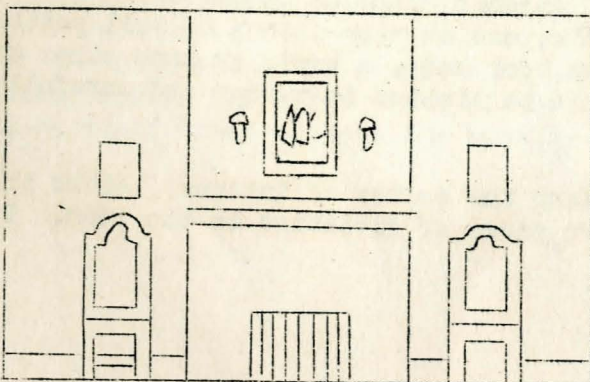
To make a room seem longer, arrange the furniture to accent one axis or direction in that room. Use long and narrow furniture such as a davenport, a long table, a long low bookcase to accent the desired direction. Place the rug so that its length increases the apparent length of the room. Attract attention to the end of the room by interesting wall arrangements or lengthen the effect by open doors or windows or even a large mirror.

In a room that is too long the furniture may be arranged to accent the width. A table or group of chairs may be placed across the long axis at one end, a davenport or piano may accent the width at the other end. Rugs should be chosen and arranged so that their edges make lines across the width rather than the length of the room.

B. Build up a center of interest. In every room there should be a center of interest which expresses the character and atmosphere of that room and which naturally attracts the eye of the person entering it. In arranging the furniture we must determine what to emphasize as the center of interest so the attention shall be drawn unconsciously to the most important object or group of objects in the room. As we enter any room our eyes naturally rest on the wall which confronts us, so we may well arrange our center of interest on the opposite side of the room from the main door. In a long narrow room with the door at one end, the center of interest might be on the wall at the right or left.

The center of interest is often the fireplace. However, it may be a group of windows close together and hung with well-designed materials of good color and pattern, or it may be a well-arranged group of furniture. "The center of interest must be the dominant idea, not of one wall only, but the main idea around which the entire room is arranged." It is the key-note of the harmony. It expresses the spirit of the room. When the fireplace is the center of interest, we should make it more attractive by hanging above it the best picture which we may choose - fitted to the position in subject, size, color, and framing. This picture should be large enough to fill the space comfortably - in size it may well be about equal to the

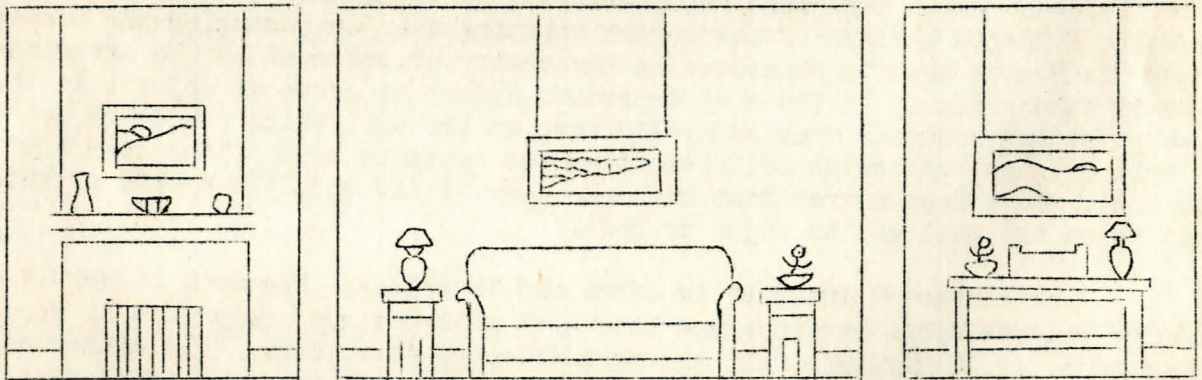
actual opening in the fireplace below. There should always be an ample allowance of vacant wall space around the picture to give it distinction. From eight to twelve inches of wall space may well be allowed between the top of the mantel and the picture so that any articles on the mantel may not interfere with the picture or fill the space of silence below it. In shape a picture that is somewhat higher than it is wide is generally most pleasing in relation to the shape of



the fireplace and opening below. A picture that is too small is out of place. A picture that is too wide and low in effect will over-accent the width of the fireplace.

The picture chosen should be dark enough to keep its dignity in the most important place in the room, but not so dark as to stand out strongly from the wall or to appear heavier than the fireplace. A simple well-proportioned frame, of a tone only slightly darker than the picture, is best. Instead of a picture it is possible to use a fine piece of fabric of beautiful design, and color harmonious with the room.

Simplicity and restraint should be used in choosing the objects that are placed on the shelf above the fireplace. They should be few in number, and beautiful in color and shape, and well related to the rest of the room. Three may be used successfully, and occasionally five, but more are seldom good. They should be arranged to balance each other and carefully related to the picture above, leading the eye toward the picture. Pottery - vases or bowls, simple in form and good in color - candle sticks, a low bowl of flowers, a low broad clock, or even a row of books arranged between simple decorative book-ends may be chosen for the place of honor above the fireplace. The articles chosen should not crowd the shelf or the vacant spaces around the picture. An effect of careful selection and distinction attained thru limiting the number of objects used, as well as balance in their arrangement is desirable. "Nothing in the room is so insignificant as to escape the need of thoughtful placing."



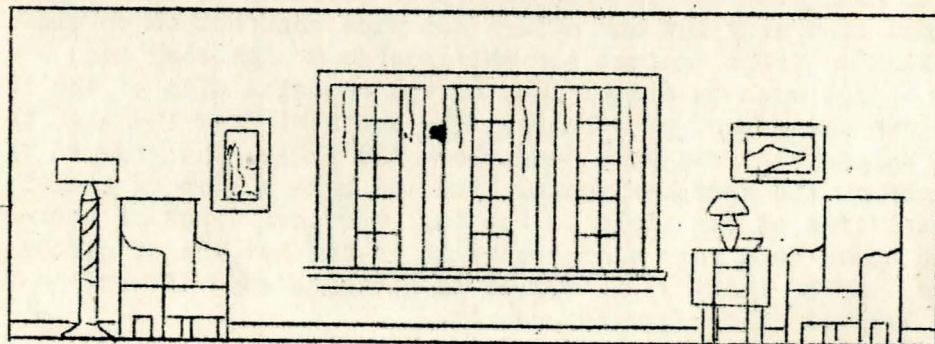
If there is no fireplace in the room, or if it is on the same side as the door thru which we enter, a different center of interest may be arranged. Choose a table of good line and of generous size and above it hang a fine picture, of a size that harmonizes pleasingly with the size of the table. The picture should be hung with its center slightly above the eye level of a standing person of ordinary height. On the table may be placed objects which carry the attention from the table to the picture - tall candle sticks, one or more pieces of tall pottery, a lamp, a basket of flowers, books between book ends, a bowl, or some other decorative object well placed. These objects should be limited in number and carefully balanced.

It is possible to make the piano the center of interest, altho the piano is not usually the most attractive piece of furniture in the room. It is

likely to be the largest and darkest. Above it a broad low picture may be used. A davenport may be placed against the wall and treated as a center of interest with a picture or a group of pictures above it. Even a chair may be used as a center of interest but it should be a large and dignified, well designed, distinguished chair.

The center of interest is best placed in the center of the wall chosen. There are sometimes reasons for placing it very slightly to one side of the center but the effect should be of a centered arrangement on the wall. Sometimes the place where the eye naturally rests first is between two windows which are not at exactly equal distances from the two corners. In that case the center of interest may be built up by an arrangement of furniture in the space between the two windows. The center of interest should never be in or near a corner.

Grouping furniture:- Every piece of furniture in the room is affected by its environment; certain pieces naturally belong together. Thus we must consider grouping. Furniture should be arranged in groups of various kinds. The center of interest and the furniture grouped about it (such as the davenport and chairs about the fireplace, if that is the center of interest), forms the most important or dominant group. Other groups of secondary interest may be formed of pieces of furniture closely related in purpose and use and placed together. A reading group consisting of one or two comfortable chairs with a simple dignified floor lamp and possibly a foot stool is a popular and comfortable group. A library table with straight chairs at each end, and on it a table lamp and attractive book-ends may form another group. A group of comfortable wicker chairs placed opposite each other at each end of a bay window, with a low table, fernery, or sewing cabinet between them is often attractive. This arrangement may be used with a low broad window or group of windows. A music group with the piano and bench and a music cabinet or piano lamp and a chair is often chosen. In a small room or a room that is square or has too many openings, such groupings should be kept very simple. In any room we must avoid over-crowding. Grouping tends toward simplifying arrangement and providing open spaces on walls and floor. In one room there may be only two or three simple groups.



C. Consider balance in arranging furnishings. In successfully arranging the furniture in our rooms we must consider the effect of balance. "The furnishings of the room should be so arranged as not to crowd all the interest on one or two walls, leaving the other parts of the room empty and dead. Instead the interest should be distributed thruout the room by a balanced arrangement. For example, heavy features

such as a fireplace on one side of the room may be balanced by a long davenport the opposite side, with book case, table and desk occupying end positions."

Before any furniture is placed in the room there are various structural features which demand attention when we plan the arrangement of our furniture. Doors, windows and built-in furniture, as well as the fireplace, must be considered in choosing the best place for the movable furniture. A door is a large high rectangle, either dark or light, that definitely counts in the scheme. Windows, too, their size, shape, and placing as well as their casings and, in the end, their hangings (dark or light) are important.

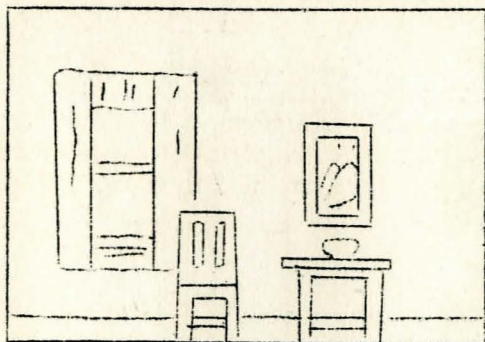
A large area of unbroken wall space is greatly to be desired in some parts of the room because it offers an excellent background for furniture and pictures. Unbroken wall space gives a sense of stability, unity, and simplicity. In planning a new home this should be considered.

Some of us are more fortunate than others in the size and shape of our rooms and the size, number, and placing of the openings. Too many doors or doorways and windows in a room makes successful furnishing more difficult, - less furniture may be used, and the arrangement must be more carefully considered and adjusted to the conditions of such a room. A satisfactory arrangement of doors and windows is one in which fireplace, windows, and doors are arranged in exactly balanced relation to each other at equal distances from a center axis or imaginary line drawn from the center of one wall to the center of the wall on the opposite side of the room.

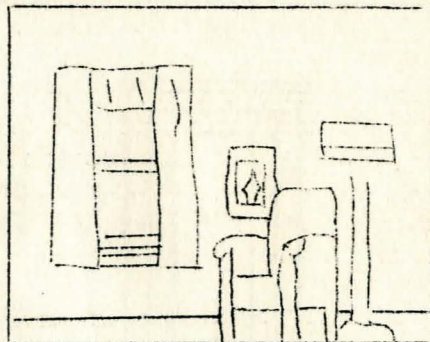
Balance may be defined as equal attractions that satisfy the senses by the effect of equal weight or equilibrium. In achieving this balance we must take into consideration the size, shape, tone, and color of any object. We must take care not to arrange all the high pieces on one side or at one end of the room and the lower pieces on the opposite side or end, not to place all the dark pieces together, not to set all the pieces that are heavy in effect close to one another, or gather all the large pieces in one group leaving only the smaller pieces for the rest of the room.

Too much contrast in size should be avoided. A very high piece of furniture next to a very low one offers too much contrast to be pleasing. For example, a library table against the wall beside a high book case would be unbalanced unless some object such as a dark door on the opposite side of the table from the book case, gave the effect of balance. The contrast from the high to low would be unpleasant, unless pictures were hung above the table, and grouped with their upper or lower edges on the same horizontal line, to make a step or transition from the low horizontal line of the table to the tall vertical lines of book-case and door. There should never be a very sharp contrast in the heights of pieces side by side. The low piece may be built up in effect by pictures about it or, in the case of a table, by a lamp or other objects upon it.

There are two ways of balancing the furnishings in various parts of a room. By formal or symmetrical balance, we may arrange furniture against the wall of a room which is unbroken by openings or has doors or windows that are of the same size and placed exactly alike in relation to an imaginary line drawn thru the center of the wall. Between two windows thus placed we might hang a picture and directly under it, set a small table. We might place a comfortable chair beside and at equal distance from each window, slightly turned toward the center of the room. Thus, we would be employing formal, exact, or symmetrical balance. With this kind of balance, the center of interest is often accented.



FURNITURE
ARRANGED
TO
BALANCE
A
WINDOW

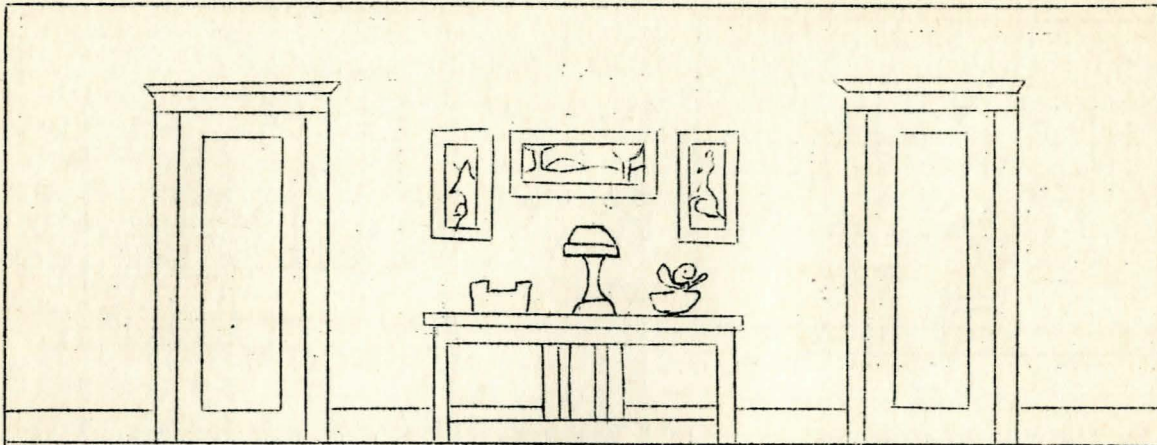


By the use of informal or occult balance, the eye is carried around the room unconsciously. Each piece of furniture is related to the others in its line, size, shape and color. Consider the line which is suggested by the tops of book cases, tables, chairs. Let your eye follow this continuous line around the room like the horizon line or the line of a mountain ridge. We all enjoy the beauty of the mountains in the distance. That beauty comes partly from the variety of heights or the line that carries our eye from high to low and up again by gradual steps. So our eye may be carried around the room. Many objects that are all of the same height placed together make a monotonous line but too great variation from very high to low should be avoided. A lamp or a vase on a table carries our eye upward toward what is above it or near it.

Pictures - We choose our pictures for various reasons, usually because of the ideas which they suggest. The Angelus by Millet, Whistler's portrait of his mother, the Dance of the Nymphs by Corot inspire in us various emotions and pleasant thoughts. A good picture is one that is inspiring in the idea which it expresses, pleasing in composition or spacing, simple in effect, good in color, and well related thru color, tone, and size to the wall on which it hangs and to the space in which it is placed. It should seem to belong in the room in every way. The frame of a picture should be less important than the picture itself in width, color, and decoration, and should not attract attention away from the picture.

We should be careful not to use too many pictures in one room for "pictures are thoughts", and too many thoughts are confusing. "Contrary to the usual belief pictures are not indispensable in a well furnished room. If the wall spaces are not too large and bare, if the walls are paneled or have an interesting covering, or if the draperies in the room are noticeably decorative in color or pattern, pictures may be superfluous." Some breathing spaces of undecorated wall areas make a room restful. So in hanging pictures we must avoid crowding walls.

It is often satisfactory to use only one good sized picture in a room, placing that one in the most important place so as to emphasize and attract attention to the center of interest - usually the fireplace or possibly a large table, opposite the main door. In hanging any picture we must be careful to avoid crowding it into an inadequate space. A vacant wall space, equal to at least a third of the total width of the picture and frame, should be allowed on either side of a single picture. If we have several small pictures to be hung, it is better to arrange them in a pleasing, compact group than to scatter them over the walls as tiny, unrelated spots. In such a group arrangement of pictures it is a good plan to keep either the upper or the lower edges of the frames in a horizontal straight line. Place pictures together that are not too different in subject, color, or framing.



We are likely to hang our pictures too high. They are useless if we can not see them well. As a general rule, the center of the picture should be only a few inches above the level of the eyes of a person of average height.

Pictures should be hung with two parallel vertical wires that carry the lines of the frame upward to the picture moulding and echo the structural lines of the room. A small picture should be hung without wires by means of a small hook fastened into the wall.

Method of Procedure

In arranging the furniture of a room we may proceed in one of two ways. The better and more logical method is to measure the room and the wall spaces and to make a correct drawing of the floor plan, a rectangular area showing the openings made by windows and doors. The furniture also should be measured in length and width. Little patterns may be cut out of paper and tried in various positions to see where they best fit. This method is particularly good when the furniture is to be moved into a new house. At such a time there is little opportunity for experiment. A family sending their goods by automobile from a city several hundred miles away from their new home were unable to be in the new house when the furniture was unloaded. They sent such a measure plan as that suggested above and the furniture was thus properly placed and in the desired position when they arrived.

If this method seems indirect and too theoretical for those inexperienced in reading plans, it is possible to think out the arrangement and then experiment by moving things around and trying various arrangements. It is necessary to place the large and difficult pieces first, considering the spaces into which they will fit well. A center of interest should be established at the beginning; balance must be carefully considered. Elimination of what is awkward to place, unbeautiful or unnecessary is an important factor.

Estimating the Final Arrangement

In estimating our arrangement of furniture and pictures, we may regard each wall as a unit and consider whether the effect is that of equal attraction on either side of the center. Dark objects are heavier than light objects, a small dark object may balance a large light object. Bright colors are heavier than grayed colors, a small bright picture attracts as much attention as a large duller one. High objects are heavier than low objects, large pieces of furniture are heavier than smaller ones of the same tone. We should also regard the whole room from each corner and look at it from each doorway to see if the whole effect is that of balance and unity.

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